



One Hundred Sixteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 7, 2019

Mr. Kevin K. McAleenan
Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20229

Dear Commissioner McAleenan:

We are writing to express our great concern about a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) list the agency is using to stop, detain, question, and search 59 reporters, attorneys, and advocates, most of whom are U.S. citizens, at the southern border. Further, we are requesting information about this troubling practice, which raises serious legal and constitutional questions.

Yesterday, NBC News reported that in January, CBP published a list entitled, “San Diego Sector Foreign Operations Branch: Migrant Caravan FY 2019 Suspected Organizers, Coordinators, Instigators, and Media.” The document includes photos and instructions for CBP officers to stop the 59 individuals if they cross the border, and interviews with targeted individuals confirm they are being stopped for secondary inspection. Some individuals have even been required to allow CBP officers to search their cell phones before being released.

The appearance that CBP is targeting journalists, lawyers, and advocates, and particularly those who work on immigration matters or report on border and immigration issues, raises questions about possible misuse of CBP’s border search authority and requires oversight to ensure the protection of Americans’ legal and constitutional rights. Therefore, we request the following information by March 14, 2019:

- (1) A copy of the list and any accompanying instructions or guidance to CBP officers on actions to be taken when encountering a person on the list.
- (2) Copies of any “dossiers” on the 59 individuals and information about which agencies or foreign governments provided information for such dossiers.
- (3) An explanation of why each of these 59 individuals were included on the list.

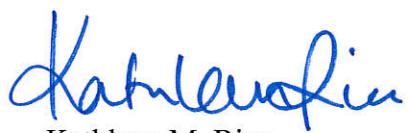
- (4) An account of how many times these 59 individuals have been stopped for further questioning by CBP since January 19, 2019.
- (5) An account of the individuals on the list whose phone was searched or seized by CBP officers.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman



Kathleen M. Rice
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Border Security,
Facilitation, and Operations